



The NH-LIFT team gathered at the Mt. Washington Hotel for the 2025 NH-LIFT Summit

2025 NH-LIFT Summit

Thank you to everyone who participated in our inaugural NH-LIFT Summit! Gathering together allowed new connections to be made, the team to grow stronger and the SURE students to share their summer research. A special thanks to Mike Skelton, president and CEO of the NH Business and Industry Association for his Tuesday afternoon presentation. In addition, thank you to our NH-INBRE colleagues for their engagement in the Networking Luncheon and at other events throughout the two days. The essence of LIFT is collaboration and team work. The Summit was a wonderful example of NH-LIFT in action!

If you participated in the NH-LIFT/INBRE Networking Luncheon, please be sure to fill out the **Research Questionnaire**. Results will be shared in the October issue of the *LIFT Connection*.

All photos courtesy of Bailey Schott with the UNH Carsey School of Public Policy

This issue of *The LIFT Connection* is dedicated to the 2025 SURE Student Research Interns



NH-LIFT SURE (Summer Undergraduate Research Experience) students participating in a group activity led by the LIFT Safety and Success team



Danika Iosty a sophomore at St. Anselm College spent the summer researching middle school aged children and how they identify in STEM. Data for Danika's research was gathered from a UNH STEM summer camp. In her research, Danika found that the way researchers define STEM identity differs significantly from how students themselves define it, an insight that could be helpful in growing the STEM workforce, as current definitions may not align with students' perceptions. Danika is from Washington State and was recruited to Saint Anselm College for the school's bowling team.

Fun fact: Danika has 7 cats
Faculty Mentor: Kevin Doran



Anthony Corbin, Josh Suarez and Sergio Ramirez are computer science students who spent their summer on a cybersecurity project. Anthony and Sergio are continuing at NCC this fall with plans to transfer to a four year university following graduation. Josh graduated in the spring and plans to continue their studies at SNHU majoring in cybersecurity. This summer the team configured a Linux-based SIST server where two of the participants defended the server while the other two simultaneously attempted to breach it. The primary goal was to successfully defend the server from infiltration by their teammates.

In their free time: Sergio's interests include video games, reading, anime and comic books. Anthony enjoys trails and hiking as well as frequent visits to the gym, while Josh spends his free time enjoying music and playing the electric guitar.

Faculty Mentors: Betsy Gamrat and Diane Fallier

Teammate 4, Alex Valez, also a student at NCC was unable to attend the summit.



Doug Kerr and Natalia Gonzalez are both juniors attending New England College. Doug is majoring in Biology while Natalia has a double major in biology and criminal justice. Doug's research focuses on the mechanics of how seagrass, specifically *Halodule wrightii* (chosen for its availability among Caribbean target



Paige Knight is a senior majoring in Occupational Safety at Keene State College. Paige's summer research was on the evaluation of biosafety in routine academic lab procedures,

species), affects its ecosystem and vice-versa.

Natalia's research involves analyzing fish guts to determine predation relationships ("who ate who") by identifying DNA of both predators and ingested species.

Doug views his current studies as stepping stone, aiming to transition from a 30-year career in telecommunications, where his niche had become too narrow. He plans to leverage his experience with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to move into an outdoor-focused career.

Natalia, who is from Spain, noted the challenges of planning her career in the U.S. and expressed an open approach, exploring a variety of options including the pursuit of a master's degree.

Passion Projects: In addition to enjoying swimming, the ocean and her love for the environment, Natalia leads a campus club related to criminal justice which includes interacting with police officers, judges and the courts.

Doug enjoys outdoor activities, gardening, and broader environmental phenomena, including the atmosphere and astrophysics, which aligns with his desire to transition to an outdoor-focused career.

Faculty Mentor: Geoff Cook

specifically assessing exposure and risk for students. During her research Paige had participants do routine procedures and tracked the potential surface contamination. Serial Dilutions were used to confirm or deny the concentration of common teaching bacteria. Data gathered led to a tool for risk evaluation in an academic setting.

Proud mom: Paige shared that as a non-traditional student and mom to 3 year old Greta, she struggled to find an internship that could accommodate her child care needs. NH-LIFT provided an opportunity to juggle her multiple responsibilities while continuing her education.

Future goals: Next summer, Paige hopes to find a safety internship that will leverage her six years in the Navy where she served as a corpsman specializing in optics and making gas mask inserts.

Faculty Mentor: Loren Launen



**NH-LIFT 2025 Summit
SURE student poster session**



Sam Elkins is a student at Keene State College graduating in the fall of this year with a double major in Environmental Studies and Biology. His summer research represented a collaborative project between two labs and primarily focused on looking at the bacterial community composition on sedimental soil samples from seagrass. The research aimed to link this composition to how fast seagrass grows or whether it's determined by the plant's lineage itself. Sam noted



Will Dervin, is a senior at St. Anselm College majoring in Classical Archaeology, which he defines as a specification for Mediterranean archaeology focusing on the Greeks, the Romans, and the Egyptians. Will spent this past June in Orvieto, just north of Rome, on the Coriglia Archaeological Site. Will was working to excavate and reveal parts of an Etruscan-Roman settlement that was in use all the way up and through the medieval period. Specifically, his work was focused on an area next to a

the current lack of research on this topic. Following graduation, Sam intends to look for a career job and take a break from his academic studies.

In his free time: Sam shared he has lots of interests including collecting rocks, constructing Legos, and indoor container gardening, with a particular fondness for cactus and succulents.

Faculty Mentors: Priya Roy-Chowdhury and Cynthia Hayes

Republican Road, called Locus 197, and the adjacent layers, structures, and features. A goal of the dig is to understand the transportation, general structure, and historic use of the site. Following graduation, Will intends to apply for a masters or doctoral program allowing him to continue his studies in archaeology.

Fun fact: Will's time in Italy afforded him the opportunity to visit the Vatican.

In his free time: Will enjoys reading, particularly sci-fi books, watching sci-fi movies and being outdoors, specifically mountain biking and skiing.

Faculty Mentor: Sarah Glenn

Ciron Rai is in her final semester at Manchester Community College and plans to graduate this fall. Ciron is studying life sciences and intends to transfer to a four year university upon graduation. She is currently deciding between UNH Durham and UNH Manchester as both have their individual benefits.

This summer, Ciron's research focused on culturing brain stem cells in a 3D structure. This 3D structure is a newer approach compared to traditional flask-based, single-layer growth. The research aims to understand what bioprinting could be, noting that bioprinting is a relatively new capability, not available 20 or even 10 years ago. Ciron shared she enjoyed lab work during her internship and wants to continue working with cells. While stem cells are finicky, she is interested in expanding her research to other cell types, such as HeLa cells or cancer cells. Ciron had no prior lab experience prior to this summer's internship.



In her free time: Ciron enjoys storytelling, movies, and dramas, particularly appreciating directors like Wes Anderson for their unique visual storytelling techniques, such as using dialogue to illustrate societal divides.

Faculty Mentor: Won Hyuk Suh



Jenna Moore is a senior at Plymouth State University, majoring in Environmental Science and is graduating in 2026. Jenna's researching historical fire activity by analyzing charcoal counts and grain sizes in sediment cores. The goal is to



Ronan Sangster and Cassidy Margerison are both students at Plymouth State University. Both Ronan and Cassidy spent the summer researching the Pink Lady Slipper Orchid. The pink lady slipper is an iconic orchid species native to

better understand fire history and how to move forward with our changing climate. Jenna is still considering her postgraduate plans. She had a positive internship. Prior to this summer, Jenna was already doing undergraduate research with her faculty mentor and will continue during the fall semester.

During her free time: Jenna enjoys being outdoors and spends time camping and swimming. Through a school club, Jenna is teaching herself to knit and crochet.

Faculty Mentor: Simon Pendleton



SURE Student poster session

northeastern North America, often found flowering adjacent to hiking trails from mid-May to June at mid to low elevation in varying shades of pink to white. The color variation from pink to white remains largely unexplored. To determine whether pollinator-mediated selection is contributing to lineage diversification between the pink and white morphs of *Cypripedium acaule*, Ronan and Cassidy analyzed flower pigmentation and venation patterns across several populations throughout New England.

Fun Fact: Cassidy and Ronan's research is considered novel, as previous plant identifications in the NE were made in the 1800-1900s.

In their free time: Ronan spends much of her free time reading and going to the beach. She also loves to cook. Cassidy, who is a senior this year, also enjoys reading along with hiking, horseback riding and playing the acoustic guitar.

Faculty Mentor: Diana Jolles



Kate McAvoy is a senior at Keene State College, majoring in public health and biology. Kate's summer research focused on food insecurity in rural New Hampshire communities. She engaged directly with community members to understand their food struggles and got to know them on a personal level, emphasizing a full hands-on approach to community engagement. Kate plans to become a Physician Assistant, specializing in sports medicine and orthopedics. She found her research experience valuable for developing patient-practitioner and community-based communication skills. Kate believes it's important for medical field professionals to connect with patients who find themselves in a vulnerable position. Kate is proud that her summer experience allowed her to build her professional skills and wants to continue to grow professionally through her future studies. Kate shared that she is a family-oriented person. Her compassion for others is fostered by her relationship with her non-verbal older brother whom she considers her greatest supporter. Kate also has a younger sister.

In her free time: Kate enjoys hiking and traveling - which included her trip to the Mt. Washington Hotel!

Fun Fact: Kate was a member of the Keene State College Basketball Team

Faculty Mentor: Meg Henning

Team Resources

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